

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

May 12, 2009

Open Session

Mr. Carcieri called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. School Committee Members Present: Luisa Abatecola, Robert Faria, Steven Santos, Anthony Carcieri. (Shannon Barbosa absent). Also present: Dr. Mario F. Cirillo, Jr., Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Edward Daft, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Lonnie Barham, Chief Operating Officer, and Daniel Kinder, Esq.

A motion was made by Mr. Santos that the Committee move to executive session to discuss collective bargaining over the teachers contract, the teachers' assistant contract, the secretaries' contract, the principals' contract, and the custodians' contract, and to discuss litigation, pursuant to R.I. General Laws 42-46-5(a)(2), seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 4-0.

The Committee returned to public session at 7:30PM. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a Moment of Silence were observed.

Report Executive Session Votes – None

Student/Teacher Recognition - Dr. Cirillo informed the community of correspondence he received from the RI Interscholastic League awarding 2009 RIIL Sportsmanship Awards to the Boys' and Girls' Swim Team and the Girls' Indoor Track Team for the quality of sportsmanship which these teams displayed at athletic contests.

Mr. Barham presented a certificate to a Foster Grandparent volunteer at Waddington School; Mrs. Gertrude Cain was congratulated and presented with a citation.

Public Comment-Communications – Mr. Carcieri reviewed the guidelines, which allow five minutes to address questions and remarks to the Chair; if a response is warranted, then the Chair will direct the comment or question to another Committee member, the Superintendent or a member of his staff.

Mr. Barham answered questions from Mrs. Texeira regarding Budget Deficits, Special Education & Litigation Expenses.

Volunteer Work - High School Students – Mrs. Judy DePerla, a teacher at Martin Middle School informed the Committee regarding a grass roots group of high school students who have been working with elementary students on theatre development.

Public Comment Policy/Presentation of Petition – Valerie Lawson, President of EPEA - School Committee has an opportunity to revisit the policy and she encouraged them to retool it to make it work more effectively, since people need to be on agenda ahead of time without knowing what will be on the agenda. As things develop during the week, cannot talk about it. Unable to present the petition at this time, but encouraged School Committee to get together and reconsider before the six month period. She also questioned the August to December legal fees, and she was confused about what was answered to Mrs. Texeira; it was \$150,000 and \$250 collectively, but this policy does not allow for discussion

Mr. Carcieri said that Mrs. Texeira asked specific questions and they were answered tonight. Mr. Barham reread the third question regarding unilateral roll back of wages. Ms. Lawson talked again about having a week in advance notice; the Bradley issue is an example; no one can speak on it until the next meeting.

Mr. Carcieri said that typically things are not voted on . Ms. Lawson asked why limit feedback; no opportunity to speak on network/computer problems. Mr. Carcieri said that the Superintendent notified everyone by Connect-ed about the network problems.

Mr. McGuinn was called out of order; he was not on the docket.

Mr. Robert Enos requested information regarding the impact of the Restructuring Plan and pay increases for new positions. Dr. Cirillo answered that most of the first phase has been implemented and the second phase is now underway. Phase I included organizing the top tier of three organizational columns, Education, Educational Services and Educational/Business Support. Phase II includes advertising for and selecting those who will occupy new second tier positions and changes in titles/responsibilities for individuals whose roles have changed. Dr. Cirillo said these changes have enabled the department to organize in such a manner that our students and staff are being better served, our operations are becoming more efficient and effective, and our costs are being more effectively monitored. Another key element is the special education with Bradley Hospital. Individuals whose responsibilities were increased have or will receive pay increases consistent with the additional responsibilities, time required, effort expected, and risk/adverse impact to the school department associated with the positions' responsibilities.

EP Education Foundation Event & Grants – Mrs. Patti Streit announced that the first round of grants (approximately \$4000) were given out to Orlo, Hennessey, Waddington, Francis and Meadowcrest Schools. This year's Duck Race will be held on 6/6/09; activities and participation by all schools; also partnering with the Newman Y.

Reports

Student Liaison presented a report.

Sub-Committee Reports – Mr. Faria congratulated the high school production of Sweeney Todd. Judging this week for Senior Projects; judges needed for next year. He encouraged Middle School parents to participate in the Martin Golf Tournament, play taking place at Hennessey School, and the Kent Heights Fair. He encouraged all to get in touch with parent groups, as there are many good things going on in the schools.

Superintendent's Report

Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations/Leaves of Absence RETIREMENTS

Charles B. Rocha Jr. (19.8 years) CTC – Director – Effective - April 7, 2009

**Diane Lombardo (18.9 years) Secretary-Attendance
Effective -June 19, 2009**

**Nancy Nowicki (24.8 years) Secretary-Pupil Personnel
Effective - May 22, 2009**

**Ellen Lowell (24.8 years) Secretary-Maintenance
Effective - May 22, 2009**

Patricia Case (12.5 years) Teacher Assistant-East Providence High School

Effective May 15, 2009

RESIGNATIONS

Mary Snow Special Education Teacher

Summer School- 2008-2009 (1

year only)

PARENTAL LEAVE

Melissa Aniello Speech Pathologist

Meadowcrest

2009-2010 school year

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Nancy Flanagan Guidance Counselor,

**(To protect position for 1 year while East Providence High School
serving as Guidance Dept Coordinator (2009-2010) School Year
at, Riverside Middle School)**

Marcia Vallese Self Contained/ Head Teacher

**(To protect position for 1 year while Waddington Elementary 2009-
serving as Special Education Program 2010 school year**

District Coordinator

**Dr. Cirillo extended thanks to all retirees on behalf of the School
Committee.**

**Financial Report – Mr. Lonnie Barham reported that we hope to track
to the end of fiscal year without a deficit (case pending regarding
unilateral rollback); there have been many unbudgeted costs:**

repairs at the high school (a \$149,000 expenditure in June) in order for the high school to be brought up to code. Negotiations are ongoing; we are still hoping to get relief through collective bargaining units. Mr. Faria asked about costs related to NEASC improvements. Dr. Cirillo did not have a response yet.

Bradley/East Providence – Dr. Cirillo briefed the School Committee with a Powerpoint report regarding a Special Education Partnership between the School Department and Bradley Hospital.

Discussion took place. Mr. Faria asked about Whiteknact visual support rooms in addition to Orlo classrooms and the kids that are there now. Dr. Cirillo explained the fluidity of students to move between programs and a wealth of experienced staff with this type of student; there will be a tremendous amount of supports for kids; parents will be able to meet staff and see the classrooms. All of these areas have been taken into consideration.

Mr. Faria asked who will be assessing the students who will be coming back. Dr. Cirillo explained it will be a combination of both staffs. Mrs. Garrison spoke regarding which kids will be coming back and the fact that she will be reviewing students with the LEA who attend IEP meetings at out of district schools. She has asked for recommendations from staff , letters will be sent to parents, and meetings will be held. Mr. Faria asked who will be assessing the level of inclusion to kids and who will be responsible as to where the child is placed.

Mrs. Garrison explained that each individual will be reviewed by a combination of Bradley, LEA and the principal for the least restrictive environment required by law.

Ann Walters, the Program Director for Bradley related that they are already operating two classes in Portsmouth; the transition to main stream is in concert with staff at schools to establish relationships with school staff. Mr. Faria asked about her role. Ms. Walters will be the program director. Mr. Faria said enough support for classes is always the big question.

Mr. Faria asked if there will be enough staff. Dr. Cirillo explained that these issues and other details need to be worked out; all have not been solved yet; it depends on the type of children and their needs. He felt good about the work which has been done so far and has received positive reactions from parents who see this as an opportunity for their children; it is important to bring kids back into the fold.

Mrs. Abatecola asked if the students will be participating in school activities at Silver Spring.

Dr. Cirillo responded that as much as their IEP dictates, they will be included as much as possible, because kids benefit from

relationships and it is part of the program to accomplish this. Mrs. Abatecola what kinds of disabilities are involved? Mrs. Garrison explained there are 13 disability categories in special education, i.e. speech, autism, mental retardation, etc. but this program is not focused on diagnosis. Mr. Santos asked if this is a ground breaking proposal or can we judge the success rate for reached goals through similar programs in other schools.

Ms. Walters said the programs are on a smaller scale, satellite programs of larger sites, and the benefits have been the opportunity for kids who are ready to be more involved; students need to be successful to be able to make the transition to high school.

Jeanine Achin, Executive Director of the Newman YMCA (which provides before and after school child care) highlighted some of the items offered this year due to a partnership with school administration. A Grant for Splash Week involved 96 students; the Y adopted a second grade class who attended a safety class and sessions of swim lessons. They obtained a grant from J.C. Penney for an after school program which was given to families in East Providence for before and after school programs.

Elementary Guidance Restructuring – Mr. Barham explained the change to elementary staff ; we presently have two elementary guidance personnel and four social workers. After discussions with principals, it was decided that it would be more beneficial to replace

one guidance position with a social worker. The Superintendent recommended that staffing at elementary level be changed to one guidance and to add one additional social worker. A motion was made by Mr. Faria, seconded by Mr. Santos. Discussion: Mrs. Abatecola asked if the additional social worker would be taking on the work of the guidance counselor. Mr. Barham explained that there is more daily intervention at elementary level that principals have to get involved in and it is a matter of what is needed more. Dr. Cirillo's decision was in response to the needs of administrators and this change is creating what we think is a response to those needs and a better situation. Roll call vote: Mrs. Abatecola, nay; Mr. Santos, aye; Mr. Faria, aye; Mr. Carcieri, aye. Vote 3-1.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – Motion by Mr. Santos to approve the minutes of meetings held on March 24, 2009 and April 6, 2009, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Home Schooling Candidates – Dr. Cirillo recommended approval of two requests; students CS and FG. Motion by Mr. Faria to approve, seconded by Mr. Santos. Vote 4-0.

Personnel Appointments

APPOINTMENTS

Kelly Ahrens Technology Director

Jeffrey Smith 2/5 Speech/Language Therapist

**Maureen Spaight Social Studies Department Head
East Providence High School**

**Maureen Spaight Virtual Learning Academy-Social Studies
East Providence High School**

**Barbara Lardner Virtual Learning Academy-Art
East Providence High School**

**Heather Pastina Virtual Learning Academy-ELA
East Providence High School**

**Kathy Dias Virtual Learning Academy-Portfolio
East Providence High School**

Motion: Mr. Santos/Second: Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Dr. Cirillo welcomed Ms. Kelly Ahrens to the IT Department; she was the unanimous choice of the search committee and brings a wealth of experience from the private and public sector.

Requisitions

Bill Lists

Federal Grants

Warrant #000896 5/8/09 \$ 127,781.53

General Fund

Warrant #000895 4/30/09 \$ \$ 85,878.89

Warrant #000897 5/12/09 \$2,627,402.18

Motion: Mr. Faria/Second: Mrs. Abatecola. Vote 4-0.

Contracts - None

Action Items

Payroll Calendar 2009-10 – Motion to approve by Mrs. Abatecola, seconded by Mr. Faria.

Vote 4-0.

Special Education Staffing Policy – Dr. Cirillo explained that effective June 1, 2008, new state regulations removed caseload limits for special education classes (10-self contained; 30-resource). Each district has to develop a staffing policy to show maintenance of effort that ensure the delivery of all services required to educate students with disabilities. Form a committee to draft policy for special education staffing. Draft document for the next meeting; policy will be included in CRP due June 1st. Guidelines for SC to follow; School Committee member from policy subcommittee needed. Mr. Faria

asked to forward to spec ed advisory group for input.

New Business – Mr. Santos read a letter re custodians/maintenance workers.

Announcements - Dr. Cirillo reminded that Kelly Ahrens starts on June 1st – he talked about a rampant virus which pervaded the IT network which was shut down for a number of days; our tech team worked diligently to clear the problem, but we were re-infected today. There are now about 100 PC's affected. We hope to have the problems solved by tomorrow.

Adjournment – Motion by Mr. Santos at 9:30PM, seconded by Mr. Faria. Vote 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Shannon Barbosa, Clerk of the Committee